

Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home

Testimony Before the Public Health Committee in Support of HB 5244

February 20, 2013

Dear Sen. Gerratana and Rep. Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Thomas M. Gallagher and my family has been serving our neighbors and friends of the Stamford Community since 1928 through the Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home. One thing we have witnessed, and which some 45 states in the country have recognized, is that the industry is changing at a very rapid pace. Across the country and across cultures, many many families are embracing the idea of offering different types of services to families, all designed to make it a memorable, dignified event.

As an example, in some 45 states it has become commonplace for funeral homes to offer catered food and beverages for their clientele. Families have told us repeatedly that food is a major source of comfort and a reason to linger and pay respects, yet Connecticut statutes do not allow this service.

While I understand HB 5244 is only a proposed bill, it is my hope that the Public Health Committee will support and Connecticut will adopt a measure that would allow for food and beverages prepared off-site by caterers to be served in certain areas of the funeral home to enhance the comfort and convenience for consumers.

We are very sensitive to compliance with health and safety codes and would seek to ensure that any proposal is voluntary - so that funeral homes can choose not to provide these services - and that any proposal would meet DPH standards.

These are difficult times for every business in Connecticut. For this reason, and all those enumerated above, I hope you will support the concept embodied in HB 5244.

Thank you for your consideration.

